

To John Bruce

1913644

My dear Sir

I have this day forwarded for you to Mr Stewart the first volume of the work which has been, necessarily, so long in my hands.

That you will like it I anticipate from the kindness you have invariably shown to any performance of mine. I know its defects as well as, perhaps better than, any man, but if I had kept it by me mine or

nineteen, years I could not have avoided some of them.

My hope is to find a few judges with half your knowledge and a tithe of your charity.

The only really painful incident in connection with the book is the estrangement it has produced between Dyce and myself; and I assure you, with as much solemnity as I ever said anything in my life, that if I had known how he would have taken in Dudgeon what he seems to consider an interference with his exclusive province, I would not have undertaken the work. It is not, seeing what I have seen, that I value his friendship so lightly, but that I value my own

peace of mind, and griefs too so
disappointed when I had a thou-
sand claims to sympathy and
assistance.

My main object in writing
now is to ask you a question. I
have printed 25 copies of a very rare
(indeed unique) English poem: the
printing & paper cost £10 and the
binding of each copy 1/2. Thus each
copy is worth exactly 9/1. I am not
rich enough to give them away, but
I am rich enough to give away
any trouble I take with them. Would
you like to have a copy?

Observe - I speak plainly - the
obligation really is to have the op-
portunity of obtaining a copy, as I
have so many claimants, but I

15 Feb. 1844

would not close my list without asking you if you wish to belong to my new Black Letter Society, for the tracts (whether in prose or verse) will be printed in B. L.

You may have a thousand good reasons to the contrary not one of which you need assign to me; only I have always received so much considerate kindness at your hands that I feel doubly bound to make any trifling return I can.

Yours always most sincerely
J. Payne Collier

Victoria Road
Kensington

Feb. 15. 1844.